M 1615
Restricted
Firefly House, 3rd tape, first series (7 tapes)
Tuesday, July 1, 1969

Mr. Nyland: So, if you don't mind, we will start with five minutes of what I said the other day. For that you have to relax, you have to sit very quietly. Try not to have any particular muscular tension. It also means that you try to drain—your thoughts particularly. That is, leave everything outside. And with your feeling, there has to be a wish to be present. It's very necessary that you know that, because if that wish isn't there it, will disturb many people.

It's always very difficult in a group when there are a few elements which have objections to something; and, without calling it really 'negative,' it is not right. Because if they wish to come for certain reasons, either to overcome a difficulty in themselves, that they consider it like suffering, that would be allowed. But they cannot have that suffering affect other people, and therefore they must make a difference between that what is suffering to overcome certain negativity of yourself, maybe, but it never should extend to anyone else. And you should have in yourself a positive attitude, particularly for this kind of relationship. Because it's unusual to have it as a group.

I said before, it is difficult for a large group because there are so many different kind of people and you all bring your own world with you. And if you can sufficiently drain so that whatever there is of your inner life starts to become alive, there's much more chance of

unity. Because the distinctions fall away the more you become essential. They're entirely away when you reach the inside of yourself, which is always the same. And when it's always the same in you, it is also exactly that sameness in someone else.

You don't have to close your eyes. It's a question of your presence.

[Beginning of exercise; silence, 2 minutes]

In order to keep your mind from running away, you have to give it something to do. You count sub vocally: "one, two, three, four, four, three, two, one," and then, "two," and then, "three"—like in the movements. Up to ten, and you return if you can. It gives your mind an activity, at the same time something of your inner mind must remain.

[silence, 1.5 minutes]

While I now talk, keep on counting. It's extremely difficult and it will require very, very special effort. After a little while you can stop it, but see what you can do to hold on to it. You listen with part of your mind, your Being keeps on counting. Because the Being takes over; it is not your ordinary mind with which you started. With your Being you continue to count sub vocally, and it helps your level.

[silence, 0.5 minutes]

We now go over gradually into talking. You can keep on counting as long as you like. After some time, stop it, because it is necessary to understand more and more about Intentional Suffering. I'm sure it is not always clear. And I said last time that what is necessary is to try many times to see if that what you are trying actually could have that, that name.

You will see that Intentional Suffering is not dependent on other people. I say 'dependent.' The instigation has to be in relation to what you are. And the accent is constantly on you, partly because you want to use this suffering for a very definite purpose of giving yourself a chance to utilize certain characteristics of yourself, and then in using

them the characteristics will also come under a different light. But you intentionally want to consider what you are.

You remember, a couple of years ago we had a yearly task of trying to find out what were the characteristics of a personality. And each month we were supposed to emphasize that characteristic trait. Then when we went into the following year, we talked about the possibility of utilizing what you had found a year ago, for yourself to see to what extent you could go against it. It wasn't a question at that time to report on it, because not only was it very difficult, but I think that also after some time, the desire to do it disappeared.

We're now a little differently adjusted to this kind of Work. And it is now for each one of us to find something, you might say, that is 'wrong' but which is a characteristic trait acquired by your personality—because it is not inherent in your inner life; it is a form of your behavior where you're apt to do certain things as habit, probably—but the accent remains on the realization of what you are. And you want to test out to what extent that kind of characteristic can help you.

It is the same way, as ultimately if one starts to uncover one's Chief Feature, which is the general motivating force of all motivating forces—you might say, like a master key to your personality in which different forms of behavior, motivated by thoughts or feelings, are ordinary keys. And the master key would open all locks, it would open all the time your personality. Not just because a little key will open a little door. A master key opens all doors, and because of that you would find what you really are. But having found it and knowing then the tremendous force that is connected with it, it could be utilized for the purpose of really reaching a certain state. Instead of criticizing yourself or instead of feeling sorry, that you could accept yourself the way you are. And when you once know what it is that you really are, then you can turn it around and want to use that energy for the purpose of being present to yourself. You will bring it up to the point of being present.

That one can become. One can become sincere.

And it is only by more and more practicing, of finding that particular attitude in yourself, that you will be able to introduce Impartiality. You can not do it in the beginning because you're very much attached to it. And it's a question then of trying to decrystallize a little bit of that bondage, and time and time again to try to see what will happen if you could follow up on that Chief Feature.

The same principle is involved when you try to take a characteristic, usually an acquired one because it is not deep enough and nevertheless it belongs to behavior forms. It even can be quite superficial. It also can have become such habit that you really don't know it any more and sometimes it's necessary to have someone tell you. And when it has to be used in connection with other people, the Intentional Suffering is your own, and only the other person helps you to bring it out. So, if you want to practice this kind of thing with someone else, you have to make sure that nothing else is introduced, because as soon as the other person starts to criticize you a little differently from what you have in mind, it becomes a failure.

All these kind of experiments that you want to do about yourself require, for yourself, such a desire to honestly find out what you are, that you have to prepare quite well before you set out in any kind of a road in which this Intentional Suffering can actually be found. And again, you have to have towards yourself an attitude that you honestly want to find out, and there cannot be any room for negativity.

Sometimes I sit when we talk about these things. I sit, myself, with a great deal of trepidation because I want to make doubly sure that you understand what I'm talking about. And it is not at all in any way a criticism. But I know how difficult it is to maintain that kind of a level for yourself so that you don't become critical about other people around you, or that you even become critical about not understanding entirely from the beginning

what I've said. And that I watch my words as well as I can, and also that I try to maintain that kind of a level which belongs to this kind of Work and not, as I said last week, not to want to mix it up with anything that belongs to an ordinary discussion of Work.

Ordinary discussions and Work continue. Intentional Suffering will never take the place of that. It is only a step further in which that what has gone on—and we call that 'Do-Re-Mi'—constantly is the unit on which this Intentional Suffering has to be based. And the assumption in this kind of a group is that you have already such familiarity with the state of Awakening or an Awareness, where there is such definiteness for you to know that something must exist which we call 'I', or that in your feeling there is such realization of the possibility of meeting God, that at that time you are completely immersed in such thoughts and feelings and that you see that it is necessary to do something else. Because the 'Do-Re-Mi' becomes 'Mi-Re-Do'; and it will not get you out of that triad, and the necessity for wanting to get out of it is finally to be able to become free from your physical body.

So, it has to be the acceptance of yourself par excellence. You have to become so familiar with yourself and so be able to reduce the different thoughts or feelings, that you are not attached and you don't want to be attached to them. And that you consider yourself just an ordinary person happening to walk on Earth, but with an intense desire to want to get away from Earth. And it's really that kind of a preparation that you have to submit to, and again I say, negativity will not only 'prevent' you, but it will prevent others. And I'm extremely sensitive to such states among people, particularly in a group like this, and as a result, it becomes much more difficult for me to say what I really want to say.

What I want to say, you understand, it is part of my life that I tell you about. It is part of experiences which, of course, I've tried—and many times; many, many times—and I tell you sometimes about the results, of what is possible to obtain. And I try to make it as clear

as I can of what is really involved in it so that and you then can take over and that you can continue and that the group as a whole simply maintains a level.

And that is why I've said it is 'special, special' people. Even if large, there is no objection when all of us can understand and keep on maintaining to understand exactly that kind of a level for which you come. And when you don't, when you feel not up to it, your honesty must require you to stay away so that maybe the following week you can. Or, if you discover in these kind of attempts certain things in yourself which are not becoming to a man—in the first place, resentment; in the second place, opinions which you have; in the third place, not entirely wishing to submit; in the fourth place, the constant desire to hold on to something that you call your own and that at times you really know you must get rid of. It does not mean that you can get rid of it; the intention has to be there. And when you take any one you wish of your own characteristics—and you can start with whatever you think is most suitable—that then you have to promise yourself not to give up, and also you have to promise that, during a week, you will be really quite intense; that is, it will have to have a meaning and such a meaning in your life—I used 'fifty-fifty.'

There should be periods, now, where during the day you really don't lose yourself, when there is something with you that you know is there, and whenever a thought happens to come it is only an affirmation of what is there already. Such an aim you must have.

It is not easy to get loose from the world. It's very difficult to counteract ordinary physical behavior forms, and of course your thoughts and your feelings are so patterned—they are cliché many times and quite unconscious, and of course you allow them. And that at times you have to be critical, that you say, "That is not what I ought to be." But never talk about that to anyone else, because I've said before, it's a relationship between you and your conscience. And when you try by means of these kind of exercise to purify your conscience, you will become much more sensitive to the necessity of keeping

things entirely to yourself. It also means that that what is the behavior of others you never can understand. I mean by that, those people who are Working, who are in this kind of a group, that you can never, never judge them by the outside appearance, and that many times you're completely mistaken.

Because you have to know their inner life if you really would want to understand them. And that that what takes place as their ordinary forms of behavior, and even if many times they are unconscious, they may be, at times, Conscious and also intentionally produced, and you always have to give the benefit of the doubt and not to judge by whatever the appearance may be of such a person. Because you don't know where he or she is actually living. And as soon as they are away from you and they turn themselves to wherever they happen to live, or they come to a quiet moment within themselves, you don't know what goes on in their conscience and in the deepest depths of their life.

These ideas start to affect a person, and not only that he becomes more sensitive, but it breaks down so many things. It decrystallizes. And if you are not willing to have that done to you, also, after some time, you will find out for yourself you must be honest: don't continue. I said last week, when you try these kind of things and you find that it doesn't go right or that it is as if you have to force it, you must stop. It is more truthful when the accent remains on you regarding your own characteristics and that, maybe in the first place, you try to make a little list of what, you might say, you would have 'against' yourself, or that God might even criticize you for if you became Jesus Christ on Earth.

Christ is an Aramaic word. It means 'knowledge.' It is really that kind of knowledge that we want to know. Jesus spoke, you know, Aramaic. And if one can, at such a time, take the word 'Christ' on your lips, without any connotation whatsoever as far as the church is concerned but that it becomes to represent for you the knowledge which now you know about, the knowledge that will help you to freedom, the knowledge that consists in

trying to Work on yourself. Because together with this Partkdolg-Duty, it is your duty only to disclose it to God himself, whatever is this God and whatever it is that you consider as a higher form of living.

I remember, during my period I used to name Gurdjieff, meaning by that, a person I happened to know. And it made it a little easier, because he was not God, who I don't know. And it was not an image that I had to make of something I didn't know. But I simply attached to Gurdjieff something that I felt he had worked for, and that for me he was not just a man, but he also was a man on Earth. And without any particular hero worship or sentimentality, I used simply the name 'Gurdjieff' to remind me. And also I said if such a man, with whatever bringing up he has had and whatever fortunate conditions of his father, or the family, or wherever he happened to live, or Dean Bosch, or Kars and the cathedral and all the early impressions he received, nevertheless this man had to go through life, and he went through life and he found certain things, and he worked. And he worked with them. And after twenty years certain things became formulated, and then, of course, he had an aim.

And the aim, apparently, he could not make, he could not fulfill. The aim of Prieuré was cut short. And still, the man did not stop. And perhaps it was very good that he could not continue with Prieuré, maybe it was good for us when that accident happened that forced him to start to write. Where would we be if we didn't have that book now? I compare it a little bit with when we didn't have the book in the beginning, in '24 and '25, when it was just about the time when it started to be written. And that you might say in '27, '28, when the first samples of that book we received, it was a little different because it became available, but that we became dependent on people like Orage who actually then represented Gurdjieff. Or seeing Gurdjieff himself. But he himself, then being busy and not being like at the Prieuré before his accident, what would have become of us if we had

to rely only on that what was being told?

And this is one of the reasons why I'm telling you about Work of this kind, so that you don't have to be dependent entirely on All and Everything or on a few meetings, because now there is something that you actually can do for your own sake. And when I said "I tried to tell you of my life," I honestly mean that I hope you will take it, that you will use it, that you will find out.

The opportunity is now to find out, the opportunity is not just to try to make attempts of something being Aware of you. It is now centered entirely on you as a personality, as different from any other personality. It's all your own world. It is not general anymore. It is very specific for you in *your* particular life, with all the ups and downs you might have, and all the difficulties which, of course, every person has. But at the present time, I'm talking about your own difficulties, like I talk about mine. And the creation of such conditions in which I want to find out once and for all what is really the truth for me, because that *I* wish.

For that reason I say I sit sometimes with trepidation, fearful. Will I be able to use the right kind of a word, so that in such words there is communicated that kind of a wish as a feeling for you, hoping then that something in you remains with hope, to put to practice.

And don't, don't now, just now let it go and then next week you are reminded. It has to become now, day after day, honest attempts. And really coming down to brass tacks, to see, what is this, you, as a Being, with all the characteristics now we are talking about, and to find one and you see for this week, you can call it your 'weakness,' you can call it whatever you like to call it. When you accept it for whatever it is, it has no particular definition any more but remains a motivating force, or it's sometimes even an expression of yourself in which your personality simply behaves in a certain way, motivated by that where that came from as something that is in you propelling, resulting then into that kind of a

manifestation. So that when the characteristic is really uncovered, it may not be very nice and lovely, and still that is it: how to accept it. Because when we talk about it—Impartiality now—you've got to learn how to make you, as you are with the rest of your mind maybe, Impartial, so that something that then can start to exist as the 'I' really can be Impartial to what you are.

Things are now being put in a scale. You are now being weighed. You must know that. I'm not weighing you. I'm only telling you that the scale is there in front of you and you are put on...on one side. You put yourselves there when you keep on coming and when you keep on listening to what I tell you as the truth. God will find out what your weight is. You don't have to worry about that when you are once on the scale. But you have to be willing to be placed there, and take the consequences. You will "lose your appetite," as Gurdjieff says. You know it is necessary, because we get older every day. Gurdjieff would say, "Every day closer to your death."

I hope you remember, now, that the intensity has to be there with the intentional part, but all belonging to you. And that you test it in the outside world many times or...or, as I said last week, that you 'force' yourself to wish to think about that what you really are, and face it. And that if you become dependent on having it come out in the presence of others, that you then intentionally create such conditions. The accent is still on yourself; the other person has nothing to do with it, he only provokes it.

The question of intense...intentional: What is really intentional? Because you can ask, "What makes you wish to have an Intentional Suffering?" You can even say, "that is also how you are made," but, you see, that is begging the question, really, because, what is the reason you are interested even in Gurdjieff, in simple facts, and what makes you continue to adhere to it? So, it is...the intention has to be found in that what is indelibly inscribed in you. And when you face Intentional Suffering, that what motivates it is your Magnetic

Center.

You can say it differently: What motivates it is the desire on the part of your real life to be set free, and to attempt at any cost. Sometimes suffering is so terrible, and because it is made intentional, one says, "I can undo it;" so, I have a freedom to stop it any time when it is too much. And that is a terrible responsibility, because you say I have this desire of intentionally wanting to create conditions so that I then can use them for a definite purpose, and either I don't see the purpose or I don't get results that I would like but, in any event, I have made this intentional condition, and I can stop it. I can go away from it. I can say it is not necessary anymore, or, it has outlived its usefulness. Or, why should I continue when it looks as if it's going to be a permanent condition for myself?

You see, in all of this there has to be something that I hope for, because if there is no hope that some day this kind of suffering will be understood, I won't continue with it. If I take a task, I take it for one week, two weeks and I can do it right because I know that after two weeks I don't have to do it any more. But if I said, "For the rest of my life," I am a fool because I won't have the intensity of...for fulfilling it. When I say, "I love you until I die," it is stupid. Why should I bind myself? It is far better to say, "I love you every day to the extent that every day I can."

This is the attitude towards the creation of conditions in which you will suffer. You start out with wishing such a condition, and every day you renew it and every day you have to be assured that you do it for a very definite reason, and the reason has to be clear. It has to be an opportunity to see your life and not your form, and as soon as that fades, your Intentional Suffering disappears. And as soon as your hope fades, also your Intentional Suffering disappears, because you don't want to have anything of it. So, there is a kind of an equilibrium that has to be reached. Together with my hope, I will wish to continue that what I am doing. If I don't do, of course the hope is gone. If the hope is gone, I don't do,

and I find all kind of rationalizations why I shouldn't do it and I even, after some time, would become critical of having done it and how stupid I was. How many times can happen in a person's life, when he looks at Work and he can say, and quite honestly, "I'm so sorry that I Woke Up once. Why didn't I stay asleep?" And, of course, it cannot be done anymore.

We are all to some extent responsible for that. We're responsible for the maintenance of this Group. We're responsible for the influence you have on each other. You're responsible for that what you say by means of words, sometimes, and quite definitely responsible by means of that what you consider the level of your life, or the creation of an atmosphere or an influence you can have on someone else. And, to what extent can one atone for that? Because if you happen to Wake Up someone else, if you assist in poking him in the ribs—so that you tell him that he opens his 'I'—where is your responsibility ending? To what extent can one keep on remaining responsible for that? And many times when, then, the responsibility starts to be questionable, that is the time Intentional Suffering will take over, because you will have to say, "A and B and C" until the bitter end. You have started something. You remain responsible. You have to continue because you just cannot leave it. You're not entitled even to leave it.

Think very well about what you want to do in this kind of Work. That's why I've said it needs preparation. It also needs development. Because you have to be at a certain level, when you can take...take these things in their true value; and when you cannot, you're not at that level. That you must always remember, that then, when you take it and you actually set out and then by the mere fact of coming here—and also perhaps sometimes speaking about it—you will affect other people and you are responsible for that influence.

You understand now why I sometimes sit in fear and trembling. Sometimes when I look at what we're trying to do and when I see the beginnings of Barn life and people

side 2 coming and ostensibly wanting information—whatever it is that motivates them—we have started a certain movement on its way in the hope that that is what Gurdjieff wanted. I'm fully convinced he wanted that, because we have talked about that a few times, about the maintenance of ideas, when he was alive—during the period when he was writing his book. And the reason for writing his book, I remember that quite well. I remember a few conversations when I happened to sit with him in Fontainebleau. Going up to the little café where he would sit and write, and we talked a little about the purpose. And so, I'm not worried about that part. But I am worried about misunderstandings. I'm worried about personal interpretations. I'm worried also about the presentation. I'm worried about crystallizations in the sense of Work, so that even if you do know, that it becomes already stereotyped how you express it. And that really, the suffering for each person should be to find *his* way, to be able to say these words in *his* manner—in the way with his words and emphasis—and that what comes from his experience will give you the style in which you then can communicate with others so that it is not quotation, not just the same kind of word, not even quotations from Gurdjieff, but entirely your own world.

If you want to Work that way, that is suffering. Because it's so easy to take something else. And to go against that kind of a tendency means that you have to start something within yourself of your *own* fire which you have to feed and for which you have to furnish the fuel. And the fuel you have to make, and you have to have a little knowledge of how to maintain a fire and how finally such fire must give heat and light, and not destroy.

Of course it is difficult. I would not ask...I don't want to ask now for questions. You understand, now, sometimes questions make the level go up and down. Questions are right at certain times. I've decided, not to ask too many questions. But I do like statements—although not now. I will use the same kind of technique with Group III, or

Group II, Wednesdays. I will maintain a level with a lecture. I will leave it to a group of some people who can take over Wednesday evening. Seven of them. I will ask them so that perhaps at such a time I can go to Boston; that I need not be there and then there will be questions from the group, I hope. And the result will be a tremendous opportunity for those seven to form a nucleus and really to try to answer mutually and to give the right kind of an answer without interfering with each other.

I just want to add only one or two things. I'm going very definitely about certain things that I believe in and that I think have to be maintained. I will be more and more strict. I will be very insistent on certain things to take place. And every once in awhile I've referred to it—on Friday or sometimes Saturday and Sunday—about Barn life, about the Guest House, about payments, about the maintenance of the appearance, about the necessity of Work here and there and in other kind of groups so that the level of such groups becomes supporting us and not constantly have to be dependent on us helping them. And that they ought to feel ashamed when they dare to send little tapes which are lousy. I will be very strict about that, like perhaps I was in Pittsburgh, where also the last meeting in San Francisco it was necessary to say certain things.

I mention it now because we are more of a group than before. We wish to Work. I assume it. I want...I don't want to have any doubt. Because if I have doubt, I am not right for you. But, if I can maintain for myself the result of that kind of a wish so that then you will answer to that because you know that that is what is required almost, I would say, to 'fulfill' my wish for your benefit, then we will be able to make out of this whole activity, with all sincerity of different people trying to make really something worthwhile, that it can be maintained.

We will stop. We will stop again with five minutes. You can now think and consider for yourself what you wish. After the five minutes you can go home. Don't talk too much.

You can have some coffee. Not too much talk. Try to make it now a general rule that these meetings here on Tuesday are in that kind of a side; that is how they happen to be, and that is how I think they will be of greatest benefit, to all of us.

[four minutes of silence]

That's enough. We can go home now.

So, Marjorie, if there's any coffee... {tape ends]